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RCA87,911/4417690

Remarks

In view of the following discussion, the applicants submit that none of the claims now pending in the application are anticipated under the provisions of 35 U. S. C. § 102, or obvious under the provisions of 35 U. S. C. § 103. Thus, the applicants believe that all of these claims are in allowable form.

REJECTIONS

A. 35 U. S. C. § 102

1. Claims 1, 7 and 9 are not anticipated by Tsuruta et al.

Claims 1, 7 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U. S. C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Tsuruta et al. (U. S. Patent 5,119,357 issued January 2, 1992). The applicants submit that these claims are not anticipated by this reference.

Claim 1 is directed to a gear rack arrangement including two resiliently braced gear racks. The two resiliently braced gear racks have suspension mountings of at least one latch hook disposed on one braced gear rack and corresponding slot-shaped openings disposed on the other one of the gear racks for providing a portion of an anti-detachment safeguard while enabling the pair of gear racks to be mutually displaceable. The anti-detachment safeguard has an elastic boss disposed on at least one of the gear tracks in order to prevent detachment of the other gear rack when suspension mountings are in a position with respect to the slot-shaped openings so the latch hooks are slideably disposed in the slot-shaped openings.

In Tsuruta et al., the projection between two 5a in FIG. 3 neither forms an anti-detachment safeguard nor has a locking end portion 5b, as it especially becomes clear from FIGS. 20 to 24 and the description (column 5, lines 24 to 34). According to Tsuruta et al. at column 5, lines 24 to 34 and as shown in

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FIGS. 3, 10 and 20 to 24 "the first rack 5 is provided with a pair of projections 5a, 5a each having an engaging portion 5b with an enlarged end". However, the projection between said two 5a has no enlarged end, which could prevent the rack 6 from slipping off in the small area of slots 6a. Consequently, the projection between two 5a cannot form an anti-detachment safeguard because slipping off is only prevented by the enlarged ends of the projections 5a in the small area of slots 6a. The spring 7 is provided for biasing the second rack 6 leftward relative to the first rack 5, however, cannot prevent from slipping off. Due to the fact that the projection between two 5a is free moveable in a slot over a distance D2, which is larger than a distance D1 over which the enlarged ends of projections 5 prevent from slipping off, the projection between two 5a independent whether or not it is elastic cannot prevent from slipping off (see e.g., D1 and D2 in FIGS. 20 to 24). Said projection or so-called elastic boss between two 5a has no influence on slipping off and also neither in the narrow portion of 6a nor in the position with respect to the slot-shaped openings where the latch hooks being first slide into the wide portion of 6a in assembly and therefore never can be called or has a function of an anti-detachment safeguard.

However, the elastic boss E according to applicant's invention prevent detachment also in the wide portion of the slot where the latch hooks being first slide in. In Tsuruta et al., neither the elastic boss between the two 5a nor the spring 7 prevent the rack from slipping off in the wide portion of the slot-shaped openings 6a.

Claims 7 and 9 depend directly from claim 1 or recite similar subject matter. As such, the applicants submit that claims 7 and 9 are also patentable over Tsuruta et al.

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B. 35 U. S. C. § 103

1. Claim 6 is not obvious over Tsuruta et al. in view of Ikeda et al.

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U. S. C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsuruta et al. (U. S. Patent 5,119,357 issued January 2, 1992) in view of Ikeda et al. (U. S. Patent 4,631,716 issued December 23, 1986). The applicants submit that this claim is not rendered obvious by the combination of these references.

Claim 6 is directed to a gear rack arrangement including two resiliently braced gear racks. The two resiliently braced gear racks have suspension mountings of at least one latch hook disposed on one braced gear rack and corresponding slot-shaped openings disposed on the other one of the gear racks for providing a portion of an anti-detachment safeguard while enabling the pair of gear racks to be mutually displaceable. The anti-detachment safeguard has an elastic boss disposed on at least one of the gear tracks in order to prevent detachment of the other gear rack when suspension mountings are in a position with respect to the slot-shaped openings so the latch hooks are slideably disposed in the slot-shaped openings.

In Tsuruta et al., the projection between two 5a in FIG. 3 neither forms an anti-detachment safeguard nor has a locking end portion 5b, as it especially becomes clear from FIGS. 20 to 24 and the description (column 5, lines 24 to 34). According to Tsuruta et al. at column 5, lines 24 to 34 and as shown in FIGS. 3, 10 and 20 to 24 "the first rack 5 is provided with a pair of projections 5a, 5a each having an engaging portion 5b with an enlarged end". However, the projection between said two 5a has no enlarged end, which could prevent the rack 6 from slipping off in the small area of slots 6a. Consequently, the projection between two 5a cannot form an anti-detachment safeguard because slipping off is only prevented by the enlarged ends of the projections 5a in the small area of slots 6a. The spring 7 is provided for biasing the second rack 6 leftward relative

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to the first rack 5, however, cannot prevent from slipping off. Due to the fact that the projection between two 5a is free moveable in a slot over a distance D2, which is larger than a distance D1 over which the enlarged ends of projections 5 prevent from slipping off, the projection between two 5a independent whether or not it is elastic cannot prevent from slipping off (see e.g., D1 and D2 in FIGS. 20 to 24). Said projection or so-called elastic boss between two 5a has no influence on slipping off and also neither in the narrow portion of 6a nor in the position with respect to the slot-shaped openings where the latch hooks being first slide into the wide portion of 6a in assembly and therefore never can be called or has a function of an anti-detachment safeguard.

However, the elastic boss E according to applicant's invention prevent detachment also in the wide portion of the slot where the latch hooks being first slide in. In Tsuruta et al., neither the elastic boss between the two 5a nor the spring 7 prevent the rack from slipping off in the wide portion of the slot-shaped openings 6a.

Ikeda et al. teaches a rack which is made of resin (see, Ikeda et al. at column 6, line 55). However, applicant's boss in claim 6 is elastically deformable. Ikeda et al. gives no hint to an elastically deformable rack.

Thus, claim 6 is patentable over the combination of these references.

### CONCLUSION

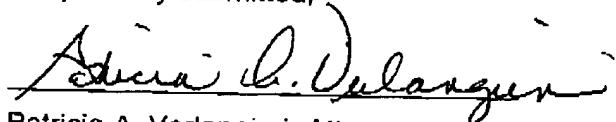
Thus, the applicants submit that none of the claims presently in the application are anticipated under the provisions of 35 U. S. C. § 102, or obvious under the provisions of 35 U. S. C. § 103. Consequently, the applicants believe that all of the claims are presently in condition for allowance. Accordingly, both reconsideration of this application and its swift passage to issue are earnestly solicited.

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If, however, the Examiner believes that there are any unresolved issues requiring adverse final action in any of the claims now pending in the application, it is requested that the Examiner telephone Ms. Patricia A. Verlangieri, at (609) 734-6867, so that appropriate arrangements can be made for resolving such issues as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia A. Verlangieri, Attorney  
Reg. No. 42,201  
(609) 734-6867

Patent Operations  
Thomson Inc.  
P. O. Box 5312  
Princeton, New Jersey 08543-5312

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